

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1557

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, MA, US

SUBJ: MALAGASY VIEWS ON MALAGESIZATION OF NASA TRACKING
STATION AND COOPERATING AGENCY AGREEMENT.

1. MOFA DIRECTOR BILATERAL RELATIONS RATSIMANDRESY WAS VERY RELAXED IN EXPRESSING CURRENT GOMR THINKING ON MALAGASIZATION OF NASA TRACKING STATION DURING LUNCH AT AMB'S NOV 10 FOR NASA REPS BROCKETT, ROBERTS, AND MCKEEHAN. HE STATED THAT, ALTHOUGH GOMR DESIRES INCREASED MALAGASIZATION AND IS HAPPY THAT NASA IS DEVELOPING INCREASED PROGRAM TO THAT END, THREE-YEAR PERIOD FOR COMPLETE MALAGASIZATION, ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY BY FONMIN RATSIRAKA UPON RETURN FROM U./S. VISIT LAST JULY, IS ONLY INDICATIVE. IF AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF ONE OR TWO YEARS REQUIRED, GOMR WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTIES. FONMIN'S "LIMIT" WAS MADE FOR POL PURPOSES, RATSIMANDRESY CLAIMED, AND EXACT FIGURE OF THREE YEARS WILL BE FORGOTTEN BY POLITICIANS BY THEN. WE ARE NOT SO CONFIDENT, FOR THIS REASON, BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO KEEP RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCELERATED MALAGASIZATION LARGELY IN GOMR HANDS, I.E., CHOICE OF COOPERATING AGENCY AS FIRST STEP.

2. RATSIMANDRESY ALSO ENVISIONED THAT IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO HAVE MORE AMERICANS THAN JUST NASA STATION DIRECTOR ON STATION AFTER "COMPLETE MALAGASIZATION" IN EFFECT, AND HE INQUIRED WHETHER THERE WERE OTHER EXAMPLES OF AMERICAN SPECIALISTS CONTINUING TO OPERATE WITH LOCAL COOPERATING AGENCY. VISITING NASA REPS EXPLAINED THAT TECHNICAL COUNSELORS HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO CHILEAN COOPERATING AGENCY
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(UNIVERSITY), AND THAT THEY CONFIDENT SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT

IF MALAGASY COOPERATING AGENCY REQUIRES EXPATRIATES.

3. ALTHOUGH RATSIMANDRESY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE CHECK OUT FONMIN'S VIEW PRIOR TO LUNCHEON MEETING (SINCE LATTER IS ON VACATION IN EUROPE WITH WIFE END HAS NOT RETURNED TO MADAGASCAR SINCE MOST RECENT VISIT TO U.S.), HE SPOKE WITH ENOUGH CONFIDENCE TO ASSURE US REASONABLY WELL THAT HE WAS UP-TO-DATE ON OFFICIAL GOMR VIEWS. HE ADMITTED THAT QUESTION OF CHOOSING MALAGASY COOPERATING AGENCY HAD NOT BEEN TAKEN UP BY MOFA WITH OTHER RESPONSIBLE GOMR OFFICES FOLLOWING TRUSZYNSKI VISIT (MATHERON MEMCON, AUGU30, POUCHED DEPT), GIVING IMPRESSION THAT MOFA HAD NOT ATTACHED GREAT URGENCY TO MATTER IN VIEW FORTHCOMING AMERICAN ATTITUDE ON PRINCIPLE OF MALAGASIZATION. AMB AND NASA REPS POINTED OUT OPINION THAT ACCELERATED MALAGASIZATION, US IN MUTUAL INTEREST GOMR/NASA AND THAT WE HOPED GOMR WOULD TAKE UP MATTER AS SOON AS CONVENIENT. RATSIMANDRASY SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR GOMR TO KNOW WHAT MALAGAUY BODY WE THINK COULD BEST HANDLE THE COOPERATING AGENCY JOB, TO WHICH AMB REPLIED THAT PTT SEEMED BEST QUALIFIED TO DO SO BUT DECISION UP TO GOMR. LENDENHAL

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